

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

Class Title: Employment Specialist

Class Code: 10927

A. Purpose:

Provides assessments, job development, placement, work direction, support services, and counseling for individuals in need of specialized placement services and/or individuals seeking and/or receiving assistance from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program to strengthen families and promote work and self sufficiency.

B. Distinguishing Feature:

Employment Specialists implement job development and placement for patients, individuals with disabilities or TANF participants with barriers to employment by providing them with case management, establishing and determining plan compliance, initiating action to remove families or individuals from the program, and counseling program clients.

Employment Representatives deal directly with individuals seeking employment assistance, unemployment insurance benefits, special program benefits, and access to training programs; and provide assistance to employers in listing job openings and in obtaining applicants for various jobs.

C. Functions:

(These are examples only; any one position may not include all of the listed examples nor do the listed examples include all functions which may be found in positions of this class.)

1. Assesses the needs of a specified category of applicants seeking employment because of a disability or receiving financial assistance from the TANF program and determines necessary action to get clients employed.
 - a. Interviews applicants, identifies specific family needs, and determines if an applicant is eligible for diversion services, payments, or referral to other programs.
 - b. Determines and initiates diversion services and recommends supportive services payments in lieu of formal applications for TANF program benefits.
 - c. Requests medical information for client files and the impact of medications on the client.
 - d. Processes all necessary forms and maintains detailed case records and files.
 - e. Provides client information to the Department of Social Services (DSS) for maintenance of common cases.
 - f. Identifies community resources to assist with identified family needs and makes referrals to other agencies/programs for services.
 - g. Prepares for, provides testimony, and attends administrative hearings related to work and compliance issues.
2. Manages cases to enable clients to maintain or improve their standard of living and become self sufficient.
 - a. Completes an assessment which identifies individual job skills, strengths, and resources as well as limiting factors preventing employment.
 - b. Develops and negotiates a specified time limited Personal Responsibility Plan (PRP) with recipients of benefits.
 - c. Formulates employment plans so applicants set goals and objectives to reach permanent employment.
 - d. Liaisons with mental health counselors about mutual client's needs.
 - e. Initiates direct services to support participants in employment, vocational education,

- and training activities.
 - f. Assists in removing barriers such as child care, transportation, and housing.
 - g. Monitors family compliance with their PRP through regular contacts with the recipient, updates the PRP as family circumstances change, and initiates sanctions when clients fail to comply.
 - h. Documents all case management activities in FICA.
 - i. Makes home visits.
 - j. Performs follow-up contacts for the specified time with clients whose cases have been successfully closed.
3. Develops and initiates training agreements, employment, and community service placements for individuals that are disabled or receiving benefits to ensure compliance with department guidelines.
 - a. Locates work, training, and community service sites and assesses the feasibility of placement opportunities.
 - b. Negotiates and writes agreements with employers.
 - i. Sets guidelines.
 - ii. Negotiates hours and wages.
 - c. Places individuals in training, work components, or community service sites based on the applicants' skills and abilities and recipient and employer needs.
 - d. Provides job coaching and training to clients.
 - e. Monitors the work of recipients.
 - f. Meets with work area supervisors to determine the effectiveness of placements.
 - g. Counsels recipients and work area supervisors to resolve problems.
 - h. Initiates, schedules, proctors, and evaluates tests and presents workshops and training services for recipients and employers.
 4. Provides data for federal, state and interdepartmental reporting requirements to show individual participation by program components and program expenditures.
 5. Maintains records of payroll information, project success or failure, and budgetary expenditures to provide statistical records of placement.
 6. Performs other work as assigned.

D. Reporting Relationships:

Reports to a Career Center Assistant Manager or a Career Center Manager Typically does not supervise. May train other staff.

E. Challenges and Problems:

Challenged to motivate clients. This is difficult because the clients have many barriers to gaining employment and have many disappointments in their lives. The Employment Specialist has to get the message to them that this is the last program available to them and if they do not comply with program requirements they will have sanctions imposed upon them which include the limiting or loss of benefits. Also challenging is locating and developing employment opportunities that provide job training and the supervision needed by the client. This is further complicated by the need to satisfy the employer and ensure that the clients who have multiple disabilities do jobs, which will not aggravate their disability or limit productivity.

Typical problems include locating suitable work, training, and community services sites; resolving problems between employers and program participants; identifying family needs; determining diversion services; finding community resources for each client's needs; work

issues; identifying job skills and strengths; family compliance; removing barriers; negotiating agreements; and performing hypothetical determinations.

F. Decision-making Authority:

Decisions include determining specific client/family needs; whether applicants are eligible for diversion services, payments, or referral services; which community resources a client/family could use; content of individual assessments; limiting factors preventing employment; time limits for Personal Responsibility Plans; whether clients/families are in compliance with plans; work, training, and community service sites for applicants; content of work agreements; how to place clients; the effectiveness of placements; the content of workshops and training; and determining an appropriate pay scale for the disabled located at the Human Services Center.

Decisions referred include the final approval of contracts or agreements, final sanctions on clients, and supportive services expenditures.

G. Contact with Others:

Daily contact with clients to give and receive information and to determine and provide services; with the Department of Social Services to coordinate services; employers and community services to obtain support and services for clients and to monitor clients and give or receive information.

H. Working Conditions:

Typical office environment. Travel may be required.

I. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- interviewing, placement, and counseling techniques;
- community resources and support services;
- program eligibility requirements;
- department employment and training programs;
- adaptive equipment to overcome employment barriers;
- reasonable accommodations;
- disabilities and how they affect individuals.

Ability to:

- use a computer;
- communicate information clearly and concisely both verbally and in writing;
- observe and evaluate physical capacities, education, work background, potential abilities, and interests of clients and to interpret these factors in terms of their occupational potential;
- develop and maintain effective relationships with coworkers, job applicants, employers, and representatives of public and private agencies;
- work independently;
- multitask;
- probe for critical information;
- tenaciously pursue alternatives and identify potential barrier breakers;
- maintain accurate records.